

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LIMA 000030

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/04/2025

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PE](#) [VE](#) [BL](#)

SUBJECT: CHAVEZ, EVO MORALES BACK HUMALA AT CARACAS MEETING

REF: A. LIMA 5192

[1](#)B. LIMA 4854

Classified By: Political Counselor Alexander Margulies for Reasons 1.4 (B,D).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: Peruvian anti-system presidential candidate Ollanta Humala made a surprise appearance in Caracas on 1/3, attending a televised ceremony held by Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez to honor Bolivian President-elect Evo Morales. Both Chavez and Morales had high praise for Ollanta, who was seated in the front row with his spouse. Their comments have prompted criticism from Peru's political class, the press and figures in the GOP. Foreign Minister Oscar Murtua told the Ambassador on 1/4 that he considered Chavez' comments to be interference in Peru's internal affairs and indicated that the GOP would consider an appropriate and well thought out response. Chavez' virtual endorsement ends speculation about his support for Humala, although it remains to be seen whether it will help or hinder the latter's electoral prospects. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (U) Chavez, during his speech, personally recognized Humala and his wife Nadine, noting that, like Chavez, Humala was the author of a similar "Quijotesque" coup-attempt against unjust systems, and that now they were both protagonists in a common fight for nationalism, national resources, sovereignty, and against the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). Together, Chavez said, he and Humala were "once again holding high the flags" of various Latin American liberators, including Simon Bolivar and Juan Velasco Alvarado, Peru's leftist military leader from 1968-75 (and a hero to the Ethnocacerista movement that produced Humala). Evo Morales, too, did not stint in his praise for Humala, whom he described as "a candidate" for the campaign of "indigenous peoples, social movements and the victims of neoliberalism." Morales also called on the Peruvian left to unite behind Humala.

[1](#)3. (U) Chavez' and Morales' endorsements were heavily covered by the local media and have provoked a series of criticisms from the Peruvian political class, the press, and figures in the GOP, a reaction that we expect to grow in the coming days. Some commentators have seized on the Caracas meeting as "the smoking gun" that proves Ollanta's ties to Chavez, connections that Ollanta had previously denied. Others have denounced Chavez' meddling in Peru's politics. Leading presidential candidate Lourdes Flores Nano warned that closing ranks with certain figures (a clear reference to Chavez) could only bring more poverty and backwardness and guarantee less employment. APRA presidential candidate Alan Garcia, on the other hand, had no problem with Humala attending the Chavez/Morales event, saying that one could not presume that this signified Humala was receiving a "prohibited economic support," and even characterizing it as a positive demonstration of "continental unity."

[1](#)4. (C) Foreign Minister Oscar Murtua, during a 1/4 breakfast hosted by the Ambassador, termed Chavez' and Morales' public praise for Ollanta Humala as interference in Peru's internal affairs during a presidential election campaign. Murtua said that the GOP would respond appropriately, but added that it would proceed cautiously and is still in the process of thinking this matter through. He also indicated that Peru's response may be conditioned by its feeling of political isolation within the region, seeing itself along with Colombia as standing apart in a continent veering to the left.

[1](#)5. (C) COMMENT: Ollanta Humala's appearance at the Chavez/Morales event effectively confirms speculation, which Humala previously had taken pains to dismiss, that he is allied with the Venezuelan President and the Bolivian President-elect. It may be that Humala decided that his campaign could get an additional bounce by jumping on Morales' coattails following the latter's groundbreaking first-round triumph in Bolivia's election. Foreign Ministry Under Secretary for the Americas Amb. Pablo Portugal, on the other hand, speculated at the Ambassador's breakfast that Humala chose this moment to come clean on his identification with Chavez and Morales in order to avoid having this issue drag at his campaign and perhaps surface at a later date when it could damage his electoral chances. Whatever the reason, Humala's high-profile participation in the event guaranteed

massive media coverage. Whether it will improve or decrease
his electoral support, however, remains to be seen. END
COMMENT.
STRUBLE